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March 13, 2009

TO: Senator Jonathan Harris, Representative Elizabeth Ritter and the Public Health Committee Members,

My name is Olga Brown, and I am the current Director of Nursing Services for the Stamford Department of Health and Social Services, in Stamford, CT.

I am soliciting your support to pass HB 5630. AN ACT CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF LICENSURE FOR AN ADVANCED DENTAL HYGIENE PRACTITIONER.

The public health dental hygienists in the Stamford School District work to eliminate barriers to access of care as students move from screening, to prophylaxis and/or to restorative. The hygienists refer and follow-up each student, to ensure that each student will receive the required care.

Most of the students will benefit from this advanced practitioner, because frequently these students wait 3 months or more for an appointment. This advanced practitioner would expedite the transition time for care, while supplementing the decreasing number of dentists in the Connecticut. Advanced practitioners will allow a variety of health care providers whose patients need oral health care, to receive earlier intervention and comprehensive care. This position is especially crucial, because of the growing number of patients, experiencing cost constraints and the inability to purchase health insurance for private care.

The additional educational preparation for this advanced practitioner's license, is reflective of the hygienists professional commitment to serving clients from all socioeconomic groups. Currently, the Public Health Dental Hygienists provide expanded services primarily to children who would otherwise not have access to dental care.

I know that the ADHP will extend services to currently underserved populations, as I have experienced the Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) augmenting the medical profession.

Respectfully,

Olga Brown, BSN, MPH, MA
Director of Nursing Services